



# Facts:



Bureau of Health Promotion, Tobacco Use Prevention Program  
1-866-726-9926 (toll free)

**S**mokebusters was developed in 1999 by the Northeast Missouri Cancer Control Coalition to empower youth to take action to reduce tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke. It evolved into a three-year program with each year representing a graduation to higher-level achievement. The program addresses tobacco-use prevention in schools, homes and

communities by training groups of 8<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to educate other students in the classroom and adults in the community. The objective is to seek environmental and policy changes to reduce tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke.

As a direct result of the efforts of Smokebusters students, 27 schools adopted tobacco-free campus and events policies; 22 restaurants adopted smokefree policies; one city passed an ordinance for smokefree city buildings; two parks are now smokefree; and numerous businesses have gone smokefree.

Smokebusters students also have worked toward local smokefree ordinances.

The Smokebusters program has expanded from the Northeastern part of Missouri to other parts of the state. In the 2006-07 school year, 1,202 students (along with 199 adult mentors) from 112 schools were trained in the various phases of the program. More schools throughout the state have indicated an interest in the program because of the results in neighboring school districts.

For more information about Smokebusters, contact the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, P.O. Box 570, Jefferson City, Missouri, 65102, telephone 1-866-726-9926.

## PHASE 1

**The team commitment to a 3-year project is established, and basic principles are mastered.**

**Objective:** Empowering teens to be tobacco-free role models and introducing them to the possibility for change in their communities.

### *Students learn:*

- characteristics of youth and adult audiences.
- the science of tobacco, the chemical make-up of tobacco and its negative effects on the human body, while identifying the positive aspects of being tobacco free.
- to identify tobacco advertising and promotion that is aimed at youth.
- to develop self-confidence to advocate for a tobacco-free society.

## PHASE 2

**Teams learn to advocate for tobacco-free communities.**

**Objective:** Introducing team members to the rudiments of advocacy.

### *Students learn:*

- to tailor effective messages for radio, television and print media.
- to develop relationships with local, state and governmental officials.
- to collaborate with school boards, city councils and elected officials to work toward tobacco-free schools and communities.

## PHASE 3

**Teams are ready to seek environmental and policy change in their communities.**

**Objective:** Empowering youth advocates to change their communities.

### *Students learn:*

- how the tobacco industry blocks attempts to strengthen local tobacco control policies.
- the truth about tobacco advertising.
- how to use the truth to educate the target audience.
- to develop the skills necessary to approach decision makers to ask for changes in tobacco control policies.
- to regenerate the youth groups by recruiting new members to begin another cycle of training and empowerment.